

Locations that meet all four criteria are considered to be at high risk for ignition of a fire, a rapid spread of that fire, and possess the potential to cause significant casualty loss to multiple homeowners when it happens. Maps of each community cluster are included and identify where these highest risk areas are located.

Forestlands outside this zone were also evaluated and will be summarized in a separate section of this report.

## **Risk Assessment and Fire Mitigation Projects**

### **Community Level**

All of the communities of Shoshone County and much of the critical lands surrounding communities were visited during the summer of 2002 by Northwest Management, Inc., personnel to assess the fire risk, the risk of casualty loss due to wildfire, the potential for effective mitigation efforts, and cost effectiveness. Input from local citizens, fire district personnel, wildfire specialists, and others was incorporated into these recommendations. Specialists from the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Department of Lands, and Shoshone Fire Districts 1 & 2 provided valuable time, information, and input to this analysis.

The cost of mitigation treatments is highly variable and will require extensive efforts to complete. However, we have summarized a wide range of treatment options and the approximate cost of those treatments in a separate document. Cost estimates from the specific community assessments can be combined to determine approximate costs of project implementation.

### **Characteristics of a Defendable Home**

At the community level, individual home sites were evaluated for their characteristics to resist ignition during a wildfire. Defendable home sites have many factors in common:

- 100 foot buffer between buildings and the forest
- nonflammable roofing material
- nonflammable decking material

- firewood stacked 100' or more from the home or in an enclosed metal building
- accelerants such as fuel and rubber tires out of the house zone
- a green yard, or a yard covered with rocks or nonflammable materials
- nonflammable siding material
- a wide driveway with room for fire equipment to turn around
- no limitations to access such as inferior bridges, cattle guards, or sharp turns

Many homes in the county were found to have some or all of these characteristics while others possessed multiple risk factors. Here are some examples of homes with good characteristics:



Firewood stacked away from the home, a wide driveway suitable for equipment to turn around in. Trees beyond the house might be a concern, but pruning and debris burning would reduce this risk.



A green lawn bordered with rocks, a covered front deck and a cement rear deck combine to reduce fire risk.



Metal roof, gravel around the house, and pruned trees combine to reduce fire risk. The trees on the left side of the house present a risk factor.



The paved street, green grass and lack of combustible materials around this house limit the fire spread risk to this home. However, the forests behind the house may pose a risk in the event of a wildfire.